A Seat at the Table
Partnering with Our Communities to Promote Health

2019 Community Benefits Report
October 2018–September 2019
MelroseWakefield Healthcare’s community benefits program is committed to building and sustaining a strong, vibrant and healthy community. MelroseWakefield Healthcare dedicates its resources to supporting collaborations with community partners and utilizing community members’ input toward improving health services. MelroseWakefield Healthcare employees act as resources and work with the community during emergencies and to improve access to care. The system identifies, monitors, and addresses the unique healthcare needs within its core communities and promotes healthier lifestyles for residents through health education and prevention activities. Much of the community work at MelroseWakefield Healthcare is performed through engaged, long-term partnerships in which we share resources and ideas to improve the health of our communities together in the most efficient and advantageous framework.

MelroseWakefield Healthcare is a coordinated system of hospitals, physician practices and community-based services providing care for communities throughout north suburban Boston. We are distinguished by the range of clinical care and services we provide locally for the continuum of care.

This booklet features information and photos from FY2019, prior to the worldwide pandemic. We are strongly in support of safety measures to minimize the risk of spreading and contracting the COVID-19 virus including wearing masks, social distancing and frequently cleaning hands.

For more information on community benefits activities, contact: Barbara Kaufman, Manager, Community Benefits and Operations, at 781-338-7572 or email bkaufman@melrosewakefield.org.
Being welcomed to a seat at the table is a way in which people come together to share their ideas and discuss the challenges they need to solve together. Through collaboration and partnerships, important information and shared resources are discussed and accessed to bring together individual strengths for the betterment of all member groups. Best results are attained when everyone at the table has an equal voice, all groups listen to one another, and then act to address needs.

During fiscal year 2019, this was our community health achievement. MelroseWakefield Healthcare completed its 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment and with the help of hundreds of residents and stakeholders who sat at the table, we prioritized health needs, reaffirmed assets, and identified opportunities to promote health in our communities through enhanced partnerships. This process included a collaborative effort with Beth Israel/Lahey Health to report our shared findings to the communities where we overlap service areas; and with Cambridge Health Alliance and Massachusetts General Hospital, who, with shared resources, further examined the impact of social determinants in our largest and most diverse communities, Everett and Malden. These efforts allowed MelroseWakefield Healthcare to improve efficiencies and shared responsibility to serve communities.

The MelroseWakefield Healthcare 2019 Community Benefits report features the activities, programs and partnerships MelroseWakefield Healthcare embraces to build a strong foundation for healthy communities across the continuum. In the coming year, MelroseWakefield Healthcare will continue to provide oversight and responsibility for community benefit programs addressing local health needs, ensure access to care through our financial assistance programs, and will look to strengthen our engagement with both community residents, local agency providers and other local health systems. Together, we will focus our efforts on improving health equity and addressing social determinants of health for all members of our communities through policy and practice.

Sincerely,

Sue Sandberg, MBA, RN
Chief Executive Officer
ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Working to Identify Individuals in the Community Who Are in Need

Our community benefits programs promote the health and well-being of our communities. We identify individuals in the community who are in need, including those with complex health needs or who are facing social, economic and environmental disadvantages. We partner with community service agencies to reach out to those in need with direct services and to attend community events to provide health education and free medical screenings. We collect data to understand and identify the needs of our communities. We report our findings and develop a formal community health needs assessment every three years. This assessment informs the development of our community health implementation plan (as required by state and federal law).

2019 Community Benefits

22% Charity Care: Financial assistance to patients to provide care to all in need

23% Access Coverage and Supports: Programs designed to increase access to health insurance, health care and social services for individuals, especially persons living in poverty and other vulnerable populations

15% Total Population or Community-Wide Interventions: Prevention strategies that target an entire population or subpopulation often identified by a geographic area such as a neighborhood, city, or county

30% Community-Clinical Linkages: Interventions that occur in community settings and that impact clinical outcomes

9% Infrastructure to Community Benefits: Investments in institutions working together on planning, implementing, or evaluating Community Benefits programs

1% Direct Clinical Services: Services to target populations that require some degree of interaction between the patient and health care provider
COMMUNITY BENEFITS PROGRAMS

Community Programs That Support the Attorney General’s Guidelines

In 2018, The Massachusetts’s Attorney General’s Office updated the Community Benefits Guidelines to reflect the significant changes in health care and underscore the continued value of the Community Benefits Program since the last set of Guidelines were released. According to the Massachusetts Attorney General, “In the last decade, evidence has become even more clear that the utilization of medical services is not the primary determinant of community health. Rather, the social conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age play a key role in determining health outcomes and health disparities. As the health care system shifts to a “population health” framework for payment and delivery system reform, hospitals and HMOs are working hard to engage in new opportunities to keep patients healthy by addressing social and environmental factors. The role of effective Community Benefits programs in addressing such unmet public health needs and promoting health equity has never been more critical.” MelroseWakefield Healthcare proudly supports the guidelines by offering the following community benefits programs and services.

Summary of FY 2019 Community Benefits

Access/Coverage Supports:
- Transportation assistance
- Behavioral health community phone line
- Patient financial navigators
- GI navigators
- Breast navigators
- Interpreter services
- Transportation
- Cardiac rehab collaboration with Melrose YMCA

Community-Clinical Linkages:
- Continuing medical education (CME)
- Blood drives
- EMT education
- Internships
- Student placements
- Center for Professional Development
- Support groups
- Cancer registry
- High School athletic training program

Direct Clinical Services:
- Adult Day Health Center

Infrastructure to Support Community Benefits Collaborations Across Institutions:
- Housing organizations/coalitions
- Substance use disorder coalition support
- Attendance at District Attorney Marian Ryan’s Safe Babies, Safe Kids Task Force
- Cultural Conversations
- Support to CHNA 15 and 16
- In-kind space
- Support for Mass in Motion
- Malden’s Promise
- Wake-Up-Wakefield
- Portal to Hope
- Joint Committee for Children’s Health Care in Everett (JCCHCE)
- Support to Melrose, Stoneham and Wakefield Alliances Against Violence (MAAV, SAAV and WAAV)

Total Population or Community-Wide Interventions:
- Mental Health education
- Creative Coping: New Mothers’ Group
- Baby care programming
- Breastfeeding classes
- Parenting education
- CPR/First Aid training
- Diabetes education
- Nutrition education
- Cancer education and health screenings
- Bone and Joint Camp
- Health Minutes and Blog
- Shadow/mentoring programs
- Community health lectures
- Baby Cafes
- Senior citizen lunches
- Community dinners
- Healthy Families/Mass Home Visiting Initiative
- North Suburban WIC
- Aging in Balance
- Mothers Helping Mothers Closet
- Food drives
- Holiday donation drives
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren in Harmony
- North Suburban Child and Family Resource Network
- Mobile Food Market
Healthy Families Program Metrics
In FY 2019, 94% of Healthy Families participants had a primary care provider; 97% of children had a primary care provider; 100% of children were fully immunized by 2 years of age; the program administered ASQ-SE developmental screens to 94% of all children; 82% of participants initiated breastfeeding; and 100% of Home Visitors received weekly supervision lasting a minimum of 1.5 hours. The program screened 100% of participants for depression and offered referrals for follow-up services when indicated. There were 55 referrals to the program and 91 families served.

Medication Assisted Treatment
Several employed physicians in Tufts Medical Center Community Care practices developed a comprehensive Group OBAT (office based addiction treatment) program. The program is multidisciplinary including primary care physicians, a nurse, licensed clinical social worker and has support from an employed psychiatrist. MWHC was mentored on this initiative by providers at Boston Medical Center and Cambridge Health Alliance.

For years we have used on-line prenatal instruction to supplement our childbirth and family education. In 2019, we transitioned to a newer and more modern web-based mobile app tool powered by YoMingo. The updated Baby Bundle content is available in multiple languages and allows us to respectfully serve patients from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. The content meets Baby Friendly® guidelines and is available free of charge on the MWHC website and as a downloadable app.
Financial Navigators

Financial Navigators at MelroseWakefield Healthcare completed 26,543 encounters with members of the communities we serve. Encounters comprise a variety of services rendered such as: applications for Masshealth, the Health Connector, Health Safety Net, Long-Term Care Applications, Hardship, MelroseWakefield Healthcare Financial Assistance; collections for billing issues; co-payment collections; advocacy with other providers for financial assistance; helping patients access medical care with other providers; counseling on benefits for Medicare, Disability, WIC and DTA services. The substantial increase in FY19 numbers may be attributed in part to more stringent reviews of all accounts, and in some instances, the need to complete additional applications including a hardship application, MWHC financial assistance application, or development of a payment plan.

North Suburban Child and Family Resource Network Grandparent Support

In partnership with the Wakefield Public Schools, the North Suburban Child and Family Resource Network was awarded the John Lepper Advocacy Award from the Commission on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren in June 2019. The program serves more than 80 grandparents raising their grandchildren.

WIC Program-Meeting the “Top Five” Measures

In FY 2019, the average program caseload was 2,600 participants (98% of assigned caseload). The program’s breastfeeding exclusivity rates at 3 and 6 months were 14.2% and 12.7% respectively, and the program maintained the breastfeeding rates for 3 and 6 months at 54.8% and 37.4% respectively (All breastfeeding rates are above the state average). The percentage of children at healthy weight is 74.7%, above the state average. The percentage of retention in the program at 14 months was 59% in September 2019, and increased to 74.6% in early FY20.
The community benefits activities of MelroseWakefield Healthcare are anchored in the roots of the health system for more than 35 years. Residents and community groups are welcomed to share their story and find help through our health system. We listen, identify the strengths and challenges for that individual or group, and find solutions. The answers often come from our partner agencies and colleagues in health care; and often inform practices and policies in the community.

In FY 2019, as a component of our Community Health Needs Assessment, MelroseWakefield Healthcare hosted a breakfast for the local Board of Health Directors. We shared our past and present community benefits efforts and asked the Health Directors to provide feedback on what was working well and where we could improve our work and intensify our community health impact.

The system also held six listening sessions in partnership with the community. For each Listening Session, food was provided, interpreters were hired, and care was offered for both elders and children. One session, covering three communities was held in collaboration with Winchester Hospital, a member of Beth Israel/Lahey Health and two sessions, covering two communities were held in partnership with Cambridge Health Alliance and Massachusetts General Hospital.

In Everett and Malden, additional data was collected using the THRIVE: Tool for Health & Resilience in Vulnerable Environments. THRIVE allowed the three health systems to share the more traditional format of the 2019 MWHC CHNA and to dive deeper into the root causes of health and safety, while promoting health equity. A report was developed by the three systems and can be found on the MWHC Community Benefits website.

Quotes About the Partnership with Cambridge Health Alliance and Massachusetts General Hospital:

“Our three institutions have overlapping service areas where we are all working toward the same goal (improving the health of the community) using limited resources. We know we can’t go it alone. It is in the best interests of all three institutions, and the communities we serve, to ensure we’re doing all we can to move the needle on challenging issues like access to healthcare, food and housing insecurity and mental health and substance use disorder.”

Renée Cammarata Hamilton MSW, MPA
Director, Health Improvement Team & Clinical Instructor, Community Health Improvement Department, Cambridge Health Alliance

“By partnering and working together, we were able to leverage each other’s capacity to create a more holistic needs assessment that listened and took into account the community voice. It allowed us to identify groups who are often ‘hidden’ and engage as many residents as we could in order to have a complete picture of the community, its challenges, as well as its strengths.”

Danelle Marable, MA
Sr. Director, Evaluation, Assessments, and Coalitions, MGH Center for Community Health Improvement
Transitioning Elder Programs

In recognition of the greater availability of robust programs and services for elders now accessible in the community; MelroseWakefield Healthcare evaluated and transitioned our long-term elder care programs to other community agencies that share our values, commitment to community, quality and expertise, allowing MelroseWakefield Healthcare to focus resources on other care models to better serve the communities’ aging population.

Transfer of Hallmark Health Lifeline Program

In 2019, MelroseWakefield Healthcare continues to offer a One Source Lifeline program to the community in partnership with Philips Lifeline. Referrals are made to the program to allow for community elders to be served. The program outreach is done by the MelroseWakefield Healthcare Aging in Balance Program staff.

Transfer of Adult Day Healthcare

After an intensive and thoughtful process, in March 2019, MelroseWakefield Healthcare transferred ownership of the Robert Dutton M.D. Adult Day Health Center in Wakefield to The Community Family with no interruption in care or services. MelroseWakefield Healthcare remains involved making referrals to the program and as a member of the Patient/Family Advisory Council.

Elder Program Highlight

**Aging in Balance—Preventing Injury and Managing Chronic Disease for Better Health**

For more than 30 years, MelroseWakefield Healthcare and its clinicians have believed in the value of helping older adults achieve their goals of aging well and living well in their communities, supported by a mix of outreach and programs designed to help improve health, independence and quality of life, and providing them and their families with the knowledge and access to resources they need to remain vibrant citizens.

**The Aging in Balance—Elder Outreach Program** blends traditional efforts and strength-based approaches to monitor health in vulnerable elders through fresh, interactive approaches to learning that help older adults proactively address chronic disease, pain, and the progressive impacts of aging on the body and mind (i.e., loss of sleep, cognitive issues, risks of falls). Blood pressure clinics, Ask-a-Nurse and lectures are offered at elder housing sites and community centers. Working with trained facilitators from MelroseWakefield Healthcare and partner agencies, the program offers six-session workshops on Chronic Disease and Chronic Pain Self-Management. These programs give those living with chronic conditions and caregivers’ knowledge and skills needed to take a more active role in their health.

“(We) worked together collaboratively to ensure that quality adult day health services would continue to be available to those individuals enrolled in the Dutton Center needing support in order to maintain their lives in the community. All of the families stayed with the program as did most of the staff. The transition could not have gone any smoother.”

Anne Marchetta
Executive Director, The Community Family
Successful Strategies to Address Hunger

Over the past 35 years, MelroseWakefield Healthcare (MWHC) has partnered with other local agencies to address community hunger as a health improvement strategy. Together we are making great strides to end hunger in our local communities.

The North Suburban Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Nutrition program

Over the past 10 years, the North Suburban WIC program has operated a small food cupboard and provides a national award-winning monthly Mobile Food Market that serves hundreds of families each month through a partnership with the cities of Malden and Medford, the Greater Boston Food Bank and a local ZONTA chapter.

Hunger to Health Collaboratory

To address concerns about access to healthy foods, MWHC is also employing strategies such as policy development through partnering with Food is Medicine Massachusetts (FIMMA), a state-led committee striving for a hunger free MA in 2028. In late 2019, MelroseWakefield Healthcare was awarded one of six $5,000 Mobilizing Health Care for a Hunger Free Massachusetts grants. Addressing system change allowed MWHC to build an Electronic Medical Record (EMR) tool to allow employed primary care physicians to screen for food insecurity in their patients and to develop simple ways to enhance referrals to diverse food resources.

Support to Local Partners

- Active member of the Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) Health and Research Task Force, Medford Food Insecurity Task Force, the Bread of Life’s Hunger Network, the Malden Food Security Task Force, and local Mass in Motions Councils.
  - Supported development of the Mystic Community Market in Medford in partnership with the Malden YMCA, the GBFB and Medford Food Insecurity Task Force.
  - Provided expertise to Mass in Motion’s Medford Food Plan and Melrose and Wakefield Food Assessment.
  - Promoted registration in government sponsored food programs to address the SNAP GAP and challenges to enrollment in WIC, the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), School Meals, Summer Meals, and commodity food distribution.

- Supports the GBFB, Malden YMCA, Hunger Network, local congregate meal sites, and Malden Bread of Life
  - Provides donations, raises funds and implementing strategies such as local school food pantries and Breakfast after the Bell.
  - Volunteers from MWHC serve meals at local congregations.
  - Partners with the GBFB and the Malden YMCA to address college food insecurity for nursing students and their families at Lawrence Memorial Hospital/Regis School of Nursing.
KEY PARTNERS

Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD)
American Cancer Society
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
American Lung Association
American Red Cross
Asian American Civic Association
Baby Café USA
Baby Friendly America
Boys and Girls Clubs of Middlesex County
Bread of Life
Burbank YMCA of Reading
Cambridge Health Alliance
Catholic Charities
Children’s Trust of Massachusetts
Chinese Culture Connection
Community Family Human Services, Inc.
Community Health Network Areas 15 & 16
Community Servings Inc.
Communitas
Criterion Early Intervention
Cross Cultural Communications Inc.
Customized Communication Inc.
Doucet’s Remodeling
Elder Services of Merrimack Valley
Elder Services of the North Shore
Eliot Community Human Services
Everett CFCE Grant Program
Families First
Friends of Middlesex Fells Reservation
Friends of Oak Grove
The Greater Boston Food Bank
Health Care for All
Health Care Without Harm
Home Health Foundation
Housing Families Inc.
Immigrant Learning Center of Malden
Institute for Community Health (ICH)
Jewish Family and Children’s Service
Joint Committee for Children’s Health Care in Everett (JCHCE)
Local arts councils
Local boards of health
Local chambers of commerce
Local civic groups (Rotary, Kiwanis)
Local councils on aging
Local early intervention (EI) programs
Local faith-based organizations
Lowell Community Health Center
MA Executive Office of Elder Affairs
MA Health Policy Commission
Malden Early Learning Center (CFCE)
Malden Homelessness Task Force
Malden’s Promise Coalition
Malden YMCA
Massachusetts General Hospital
Massachusetts Department of:
  Children and Families (DCF)
  Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
  Early Education and Care (EEC)
  Public Health (MDPH)
  Transitional Assistance (DTA)
Massachusetts Hospital Association
Massachusetts Opioid Abuse Prevention Collaborative (MOAPC)
Mass in Motion (Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose/Wakefield)
Medford Big Table
Medford Connects
Medford Family Network (CFCE)
Medford Health Matters
Medford HUB
Medford Substance Abuse Task Force
Melrose Alliance Against Violence
Melrose Community Coalition
Melrose Family YMCA
Melrose Human Rights Commission
Melrose Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition
Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Middlesex County District Attorney
Mystic Valley Elder Services
Mystic Valley Public Health Coalition
Mystic Valley Tobacco and Alcohol Program (MVTAP)
NAMI
Oak Grove Improvement Organization
Philips Lifeline
Portal to Hope
Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse (RCASA)
Reading Response
Regional EMS Providers
Regis College
RESPOND Inc.
The Salvation Army
The Sharewood Project
Substance Abuse Prevention Collaborative (SAPC)
Stoneham Alliance Against Violence
Stoneham Theatre
Tailored for Success
Tri-City Homelessness Task Force
Tri-City Hunger Network
Tufts Medical Center
Tufts Medical Center Community Care
Tufts University
Wakefield Alliance Against Violence
WAKE-UP: Wakefield Unified Prevention
Wayside Youth and Family Services
West Medford Community Center
Winchester Hospital/Lahey Health
YWCA of Malden
Zonta Clubs of Malden and Medford
Zoo New England – Stone Zoo
For more information on community benefits activities, contact:

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